

House Republican Press Release

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Reps. Labriola, DelGobbo Sponsor Bill To Repeal Controversial ConnPACE Provision



Current Law Still Permits State To Take Estate Assets To Cover Prescription Benefits

State Representatives David Labriola, R-Naugatuck, and Kevin DelGobbo, R-Naugatuck, today co-sponsored legislation that would repeal the law allowing the state to recoup prescription drug benefits from the estates of certain ConnPACE recipients after their deaths. House Bill 5192, An Act Eliminating Estate Recovery Provisions With Respect To The Connpace Program, is now before the Legislature's Appropriations Committee for consideration.

The ConnPACE program helps elderly and disabled individuals pay for most prescription drugs, insulin, insulin syringes and needles. Public Act 03-3 gives the state a claim on the estates of deceased ConnPACE beneficiaries to recoup the money the state has paid to help them with their prescription expenses. In November 2003, Governor John G. Rowland announced that his administration would not pursue such recoveries.

"While Governor Rowland has directed that the state not try to recoup estate assets, there is nothing preventing future administrations from doing so," said Rep. Labriola. "It is important to pass this legislation now to protect the rights of our Seniors."

"Given the state of our national healthcare system," said Rep. DelGobbo. "ConnPACE truly is a vital program that we offer, and I wholeheartedly believe that we should return it to its original intent."

In published reports, the recoup measure has been called one of the first of its kind in the country. It applies to roughly 45,000 low-income seniors and 6,000 disabled individuals who participate in ConnPACE. It was also estimated that than 500 recipients had initially withdrawn from ConnPACE to avoid the estate recovery measure.

The current law applies to deaths on or after September 1, 2003, and allows recoupment of ConnPACE benefits the deceased person actually received on or after July 1, 2003. The amount recovered would only be the amount the State paid.